1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

of the Selective System were of considerable importance. The main receiving countries were formulating restrictive laws and imposing quotas on entry. The physical, educational and social backgrounds of intending emigrants therefore needed considerable attention. Of the prospective emigrants in the early 1920's, 90 per cent. were illiterate and apart from apprenticeship schemes in the Dockyard there existed no opportunities for vocational or technical training. It can be assumed that only an infinitesimal number of migrants possessed any capital. Casolani, the Superintendent of Emigration between 1918 and 1930 claimed that the sudden realisation of the need for educating and training intending emigrants was most salutary in that it clearly showed how the existing educational system had - 'for a century been absolutely unrelated to the present needs of the people' (28). Since 1920, vocational training courses have been developed, a Migrants Training Centre opened in 1927, and more recently an Industrial Training Centre. In 1956 nearly 1,000 students were attending evening classes and many utilising other schemes. Ironically enough, by the 1950's the burden of expenditure incurred in the training of people who were to use their skills elsewhere, now began to prove in itself a major problem.

The direction of emigration since 1920 is illustrated in Figs. 60, 61, 62. Briefly, the major trends may be outlined as follows. Short-distance migration to Europe and North Africa declined rapidly and returns increased during the 1920's of economic dislocation and increasingly restrictionist policies in the receiving countries. The United States, Canada and Australia by various quota schemes reduced the inflow from Europe and that part of Maltese long-distance movement via the mainland as well as direct was struck a final blow by the 1930-31 world slump. The most rapid revival took place in movement to the United Kingdom where Maltese status as British subjects ensured preferential treatment. Economic conditions in all other areas other than Australia prevented any other revival before World War II destroyed all possibility of movement.

During the war, continued population growth and obvious hardships and insecurity pointed to emigration as a desirable action and led to official preparation for a post-war exodus. By the end of December 1946 nearly 12,000 prospective emigrants had been registered of whom over 10,000 wished to go to the U.S.A. and Australia (in roughly equal numbers). Until 1948 shipping shortages, administrative difficulties and the presence of a housing problem in Australia, together with a boom in domestic demand for labour in reconstruction work, slowed down the actual rate of movement. At the same time pressure kept building up and by March 1949 there were 42,120 registered prospective migrants.

In that same year financial assistance to would-be emigrants was made available on a significant scale. As from 1947 the Maltese Government contributed to a Passage Assistance Scheme whereby 75 per cent. of the cost of passage would be provided to 'suitable, necessitous and deserving cases with good prospects of employment abroad', a scheme more generous in its coverage than that available in 1946 from the Emergency Unemployment Loan Scheme. With effect from the beginning of 1949 the Passage Assistance Agreement concluded between Malta and Australia made available more capital than Malta alone could supply but, in that the equal grants made by both Governments were each limited to £30 per capita, a greater onus was placed on the migrant. Even so during 1949 nearly three and a half thousand people left for Australia under passage assistance schemes and in 1950 this rose to nearly 5,000, a proportion in each case of over 80 per cent. of all assisted emigrants. Between 1951 and 1953 economic difficulties in Australia reduced the strength of attraction to that country and a relatively greater proportion of movement was direct towards Canada.

By 1953, Australian economic revival and a firm acceptance of an emigration policy by the Maltese Government foreshadowed an impending increase in emigration and the United Kingdom Government agreed to alleviate the personal and Budgetary strains in Malta by making a contributory grant of up to £200,000 towards the Passage Assistance Scheme. By 1956, 60 per cent. of all expenditure on assistance was being borne by the United Kingdom Government, 10 per cent.

[TEXT continues on P. 160-C]

2: Boissevain E-5 (1960-1961) 1965
EZ6 Malta EZ6

landlords and other important people who influence the affairs of the country live and work in the city or its suburbs. Finally, the greater part of the island's wage-earning population travels to work in this area.

Differences in language, dress and education set many of the villagers apart from their urban compatriots. That this should be so is not surprising, for the inhabitants of the city have been in contact with the country's foreign masters for many centuries. The Maltese upper classes, and those who aspire to be so considered, have studiously imitated the manners, speech and dress of these foreign residents. An English visitor early in the seventeenth century remarked on this contrast between the townsmen, who struck him as being 'altogether frenchified', and the countrymen, whom he described as 'half clad, and indeed a miserable people'.[1]

There is a noticeable difference between the heavy consonants and broad vowels of the uneducated countryman, and the English-accented Maltese of the inhabitants of Sliema, many of whose children speak more English than Maltese. There are also differences in vocabulary and inflection, for the language spoken in Valletta and the towns contains many more Italian and English words and expressions than the village Maltese. In fact, their preference for foreign words has given the inhabitants of Sliema the collective, and slightly derogatory, nickname of *tal-mama*, which derives from their habit of using the Italian word *mamà* (mother) instead of the Maltese *omm*. Village children, however, are now taught a standard Maltese at school, and they are urged to substitute this, *il-Malti bil-pulit*, for their local dialects.

The social and cultural differences between town and country have led to the creation of stereotypes. The typical townsman was often described to me by villagers as a white-collar worker who goes to cocktail parties, tries to look like an Englishman – pipe, tweeds and moustache – and speaks English to his children. The villager, on the other hand, is portrayed as an illiterate rustic who spends his money on wine and fireworks, without a thought for the future of his children. Both caricatures, of course, are gross exaggerations, but each, none the less, contains elements of truth. But many farmers and poor village labourers make great sacrifices in order to give their children an education beyond the elementary level.

[1] George Sandys, *A Relation of a Journey Begun A.D. 1610* (London, W. Barnett, 1615), p. 234.

2: Boissevain E-5 (1960-1961) 1965
EZ6 Malta EZ6

156 577 talked about' (*Miskin min jiġi f'ilsien in-nies*). This is especially true for those persons whose social position does not permit them to remain outside the circle in which criticism and gossip circulates. For these the esteem of neighbours is more important than office.

156 554 575 Social status is the fourth quality of leadership mentioned. High status is a desirable and, in some cases, necessary quality for the holders of certain offices. The president of a band club is required to act as its ambassador and to handle its external relations; a person with high status is an obvious asset. He can meet visiting dignitaries and perform the required speech making without embarrassment to the club. Thus the president and vice-president of the clubs have often been invited to fill those offices because of their high status. Some clubs create the office of honorary patron for benefactors who are willing to lend their names – and status – to the clubs, although they take no part or interest in their actual running.

High social position is also an asset to the office of treasurer; for at some time or another he is almost sure to be accused by the village gossips of putting his hand into the purse. Considerable social distance between him and his critics renders him less vulnerable to their comments. It also makes potential critics less vocal. People are often willing to concede integrity to their superiors which they deny to their equals.

The secretary of the club does not need high status to carry out his work successfully, although it is certainly an asset. But he must have at least one of the attributes of high status, namely education; for as administrator of the club he is required to do a great deal of paper work. On the other hand, occupying one of the important offices in itself confers prestige upon a person. Thus the secretary is accorded a higher social status that he would have if he did not occupy that position, assuming for a moment that he had no other attributes which would confer status upon him.

156 463 554 871 Two important attributes of status are education and occupation. Education is the key that unlocks the world of the printed word and frees people from dependence on patrons willing to interpret it. Education also leads to better employment opportunities. Since entrance to the civil service, the professions and many commercial concerns is by competitive examination, the Maltese attach great importance to formal education.

2: Boissevain E-5 (1960-1961) 1965
EZ6 Malta EZ6

There is considerable difference in the social status ascribed to various jobs. Non-manual occupations have the highest status, manual occupations the lowest. The professionals – the priest, doctor, lawyer, chemist or teacher – are at the top; while the farmers are at the bottom. In many respects a government clerical officer is also at the other end of the scale from the farmer. The civil servant has a steady, relatively easy job with a good cash income and comfortable pension at the end. He also has ready access to influential persons in the government. His is a life of security and relative independence. The farmer, on the other hand, has been looked down on for centuries. He represents the traditional life of dependence: dependence upon the weather, the market, the *pitkal*, or middleman, for cash advances, the letter-writer and the patron through whom established authority has to be contacted. Education and wage labour have presented the farmer with a means of escape from that dependence and the exhausting labour in his rocky fields. Where he has had the opportunity, he has been quick to turn his back on the traditional occupation of his forefathers.

Wealth is another determinant of status. This is generally related to occupation. There has always been a considerable difference between the standard of living of the professionals and that of the average countryman. But until the past war, there was relatively little difference in the standard of living of most villagers. True, the more affluent lived in the large houses on the main square, and the poorer people lived in the alleys and streets remote from the square. Most people ate similar food, dressed alike and furnished their houses in the same way. But the increase in the level of wages, which followed the war, has changed that pattern. New houses, cars, fridges and transistor radios have become a tangible index of success and status. People are now being graded according to the number of these symbols they own.

Education, occupation and wealth are thus the chief criteria by which social position is differentiated. A person who has all these attributes has high status. But a person with high status is not necessarily a leader; for he may not possess the innate qualities required of a successful leader – courage, responsibility and willingness to work. Where a person has both high status and possesses these qualities – as well as ambition – he will undoubtedly

17 621 793 795 of Malta and Gozo than in the towns, where dockyard developments and other industrialization have produced a new kind of social environment. This is an important subject in itself but, for the present, attention is to be confined to the rural districts where change has to date been slower than in the towns but where the same factors are appearing now along with the rapid 'urbanization' of the villages.

175 621 793 871 In traditional Malta the function of the clergy[10] extended far beyond matters of religion. The priests were the teachers, doctors, and legal advisors as well as spiritual guardians of the people. Government-organized education began in the nineteenth century. Previously such formal education as there was had been under ecclesiastical auspices. The clergy were literate when almost all the rest of the population was not. This concentration of learning produced a situation in which only the clergy were able to step forward to take the lead among Maltese, for the nobility, which might [669] have been expected to provide a focus and leadership, tended [648] to be more Italian or Spanish than Maltese. Even revolutionary leaders came from the ranks of the clergy; the Mannarino Revolt against the Order of St. John (1775) and the rising against the French during the brief occupation of the Islands by Napoleon (1798-1800) are instances.

175 795 For some centuries before the arrival of the British in 1800, the Church had built up its dominating position in both [874] village and town. Even the educated townsman going to the University came strongly under the influence of the Church, for the University, itself a Jesuit foundation of long stan- [178] ding, was and still is best known for its Theology. However, during the nineteenth century, the major changes within the Church of Malta were connected with purely administrative details of keeping pace with the rapidly rising population[1].

Many new parishes were created in the second half of the nineteenth century and in the early part of the twentieth. The Archbishopric of Malta was established in 1831 with the separation from the jurisdiction of Palermo, and the Bishopric [178] of Gozo was founded in 1863. A movement of great sociological importance during the present century has been the growth of the Lay Apostolate in the Islands, especially in the urban areas. This represents a counter-attack against the forces which are today tending to detract from the traditional omnipotence of the Church. It is only a matter of time before the problems which the Church is facing in the towns will loom much larger than at present in the country districts and in Gozo[11].

[Village of Mgarr]

Building went ahead slowly on the immense construction as costs were defrayed by private subscription in kind and in money, and the villagers were themselves responsible for much of the labouring work. Money and farm produce of every variety was given towards the cost which, in 1939, had passed £10,000 (B/54 - 12.8.1939); this in a parish which even ten years later had no more than 2,218 people (B/167 - 1948).

With the growth of Mgarr, assistant priests were attached to the Parish, notably Father (later Monsignor) Edgar Salamone, who went to the village in 1920 and became Parish Priest a decade later. The work of this one priest not only pays him personal tribute but illustrates the way in which Mgarr acquired the characteristics and features possessed by other villages of much longer standing in the Islands, with the Church itself as the prime consideration and focus of energy and resources. Mgr. Salamone was "sickened by the ignorance and backwardness of the people of Mgarr"[15] and set about establishing some sort of schooling in the village. He acquired premises, used at week-ends by the part-time village barber, and opened a school in 1920 for about 40 children and adults. Three years later a Government elementary school was opened (19.9.1923) and support for this still novel feature of the village grew fast enough for nearly all children to be attending when the Compulsory Attendance Act was passed in 1926.

At this time the health of the villagers was cared for by a Dispensary which opened once a week and by Mgr. Salamone himself. A statement in the Malta Legislative Assembly of 1933 observed that the Priest of Mgarr kept "a medicine chest of his own and people used to call on him at all hours of the day and night. He used to pack up his medical kit and go to anyone's bedside, whenever he was called for" (B/291, p.6). As in all things the villagers turned to their Priest in difficulty or trouble whether spiritual, medical or social, as had been the custom for centuries. In 1933, however, the first medical officer for Mgarr began his duties in the village, and another of the traditional functions of the Priest passed to specialist hands.

After this, interest was turned again to building and the spacious esplanade in front of the Church was laid out in 1935, followed by a nearby construction to house the Police Station, Post Office, Government Dispensary and the District Medical Officer. Once again the villagers themselves were responsible for a great deal of the building work, as they were in the case of the Church which continued to grow until its completion and dedication in 1948 - at a total cost of some £16,000[15]. By the mid-thirties Mgarr had

175 458 511 [464] [184] between the unskilled labourer and the skilled. This dichotomy was a regular feature during the nineteenth century, as in the twentieth, and is to be distinguished from the rise and fall of prosperity and depression which characterized the totality of economic life in Malta. Malta was highly susceptible to events in the Mediterranean basin and in Europe as a whole and was much affected by changes in trading patterns and in strategy, so that the fortunes of the Maltese fluctuated with the alternation of prosperity and depression during the nineteenth century. [731] The sequence of wars, trade booms and slumps, droughts, epidemics and other events which affected the Mediterranean in general was particularly strongly felt in vulnerable Malta (B/556).

175 184 511 178 The major economic developments arising from the growth of the dockyard and the consolidation of the Islands' role have been outlined in Section 1. The various stages in this expansion were reflected in the economic life and the living standards of the Maltese just as the chain of external events made their presence felt. In all this the fortunes of one section of the population, such as the farming community, could at no time stand unaffected by fluctuations within the economy of the Islands as a whole.

175 178 [184] [871] Malta remained sharply divided within itself by class, district and education and the parallel differences of living standards between one section of society and another were continued. But the later decades of the nineteenth century saw, on the social as distinct from the economic plane, the beginnings of general education which, during the present century, was to remove the illiteracy which had for so long prevented the rural classes in Malta and Gozo from having any experience of life and society outside the limits of the village. [184] [369] Improvements in transport and communication within the Islands and the spread of amenities from the Urban area to the villages in the later nineteenth and in the twentieth centuries further tended to remove the veil of isolation which had shrouded the villages of Malta and Gozo and kept them cut off from the social and cultural [621] changes of the towns. Traditionally, each village had been a closely-knit unit under a Parish priest, having little contact with Valletta and perhaps less with the villages in other parts of the Islands (Section 1).

In the later decades of the nineteenth century the forces indicated were beginning to modify the position but it was not until the present century and particularly

This increase in the

178 291 [511] [871] [702] range of demands along with the near disappearance of home-produced garments has therefore required a much enlarged financial outlay on this part of the family budget. The villager now often takes a special pride in the clothing of his children, both the infants and those attending school. The compulsory attendance at school throughout the Islands has made the countryman more clothes-conscious, while the War of 1939-45 and the conscription which it brought put some men into shoes (or boots) for the first time and demanded that they be dressed to a rather higher standard than had been their practice before.

Work and Labour

* 159 241 461 464 As seen, Ġanri's normal labour force consists of himself, his brother and nephew. His own children being all below school-leaving age contribute relatively little. This trio apportioned their time, during the agricultural year 1956-57 when a detailed study was made, as under:

(a) Work on crop land, including cultivation, manuring, sowing, irrigation, crop protection, harvesting and transport of produce

(i) on the joint holding	- fruit.....	1740	man/hours
	- vines.....	489	" "
	- cereals & fodder...	1437	" "
	- potatoes...	868	" "
	- other vegetables...	505	" "
(ii) on Ġanri's own holding	- vines....	444	" "
	- cereals & fodders..	222	" "
	- vegetables	65	
(b) Other work connected with holding.....		109	" "
(c) Repair of storm damage.....		160	" "
(d) Building of pig-sties.....		100	" "
(e) Miscellaneous.....		677	" "
		6816	man/hours

In short, a total of 6818 man/hours was applied to about 62 tmien of land (excluding contractors' plowing etc.) an average of 110 man/hours per tomna. The above data are based on a daily work record kept by the farmer during the agricultural year 1956-57. The material may also be analysed on the basis of his calendar of activity on the farm for the year (Summary, E), and may be compared with a parallel work-analysis for two other farmers who provided a similar diary of their movements. Whereas Ġanri is an arable- and fruit-farmer, working largely dry (baghli) fields and terraces, the other two examples chosen for comparative purposes include a man whose farm nucleus is a large and fertile irrigable (saqwi) block (Case XI) and one who is a herdsman with fields producing fodder for his goats together with some vegetables for sale and for family use (Case II).

000 In the first two cases the seasonal distribution of

159 In the first two cases the seasonal distribution of
46 activity reflects the major points of contrast between the
241 'dry' and 'irrigated' operator. The herdsman stands in con-
231 trast to both of these with the care of his animals occupying
a large part of every day of the year - even including Sundays
and feste days when the field-working farmer expects to be off
duty.

159 Ġamri and farming
829 Ġamri is a highly intelligent man in his
241 forties who by his own efforts has progressed well beyond the
[212] limits of his very elementary formal education. He reads the
Maltese-language daily 'Il-Berqa' (B/55) and keeps abreast of
[191] the school work of his children whom he encourages to learn
[871] English thoroughly as "the land cannot be divided among them
all". English language is synonomous with education in his
thinking, and education, in turn, he sees as the means of
escape from the lowly position of the farmer in Maltese
society. "We are but an Arab breed", he observes somewhat
ashamedly. He himself has "little faith in the Government
[722] - which should help us". Much of this attitude had its roots
in the War years of 1939-45 when the siege and food shortages
produced something of a Golden Age for the food-producer.
The farmer has not forgotten the £10 offered by the Government
for 1 cwt of potatoes. Since the return to peace-time con-
[454] ditions the economic position of the farmer has certainly
deteriorated rapidly with the depletion in his reserves, built
up during hostilities, and the rise in labour costs and in the
[729] cost of living. During the War "the farmer was not so
[435] hungry as the townsman who had to rely on the black market";
now his position is one of a constant battle with rising
[434] costs. Ġamri, as an arable farmer, lacks the steady and
[178] guaranteed income of the milk-producing herdsman. His recent
[231] moves towards pig-meat production represent an attempt to get
into an apparently more profitable line.

159 His nephew and many other farmers, though not Ġamri him-
829 self, make the mistake of failing to distinguish between the
794 Church and the Government in their attitude to "the authorities".
18 Thus the nephew regards the Catholic Action movement (of which
178 he is an active member) as somehow "helping to run the country".
But even Ġamri himself thinks that the Social Action Movement
(another part of the Church's Lay Apostolate) must have some
part in the secular administration of the country for he be-
lieves that an application for relief for storm damage made,
through the Parish Priest, to that Movement amounts to an
159 approach to the 'Gvern' (Government) of which he is so full
829 of criticism. The case illustrates a point made elsewhere
18 that the Maltese farmer is still primarily village-conscious.
178 Clearly this is not to deny, however, that his horizon today
is much wider than was the case when his father regarded

[P.141]

*159 554 [441] [511]

Socially and economically this man is not a farmer. For two generations the machine importing and other business dealing of the family have given them something of a middle-class status in the village. Their standard of living and the house they occupy reflect their above-average prosperity while their literacy and foreign contacts have further enhanced their social standing.

226 463

PART 3. A Note on the Fishermen of Malta and Gozo.

The fishermen of the Maltese Islands deserve mention in this report as their position today has many points in common with that of the farmers.

226 463 162

A 1957 estimate put their number at 840 (B/177 - 1957, Section F, p.1). This represented about 1% of the total gainfully occupied population at the time and is equivalent to only 11% of the number of full-time farmers in the Islands, although only about half of the 840 appear to be full-time fishermen. "Many are engaged in the industry for part of the year only and they usually have an laternative occupation ashore" (B/250, p.13).

226 463 178

Burdon, in his 1956 report, sums up the present condition of the fishermen : "The most remarkable feature of the industry is the diversity of methods which individual fishermen use. Some fishermen are more advanced than others, but in general they are progressive and their knowledge of the local fisheries is extensive. Unfortunately they have little contact with the world beyond Malta and do not learn of new developments in fishing technique. This is aggravated by the comparatively low standard of education" (B/250, pp.13-14). [871]

The parallel with farming and farmers in Malta is clear. Burdon observes that recent developments "make it imperative that vocational training should be given to the fishermen. This must be simple in form and should be taken to the fishermen - i.e. the classes must be held in the fishing centres at times when the fishermen are available. But such measures are unlikely to meet with success if confined to the fishermen whose livelihood depends upon fishing whenever the weather permits. Special attention must, therefore, be paid to the children of the fishermen who will become the fishermen of tomorrow" (B/250, p.14).

226 463 891 809 829 014

The present writer holds that the need for education in agriculture is exactly parallel to Burdon's recommendation. But, whereas a start on these lines has already been made in farming (Section 4), nothing has been done in the case of fishing, although the need for the technical education of the fisherman has been stressed since as long ago as 1931 (B/237, p.47). There are still no qualified Maltese skippers (B/250, p.14) and, for work in the more distant grounds off Lampedusa and Sicily, Italians are employed. They are regarded with some awe by local fishermen for their literacy, technical knowledge and the rather higher wages which they can command.